

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00  
DODE-00 /033 W

-----065040 090424Z /21

R 071034Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7621

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

CINCPAC

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0764

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PORS, PEPR EAID MP US UR

SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - JULY 7, 1978 - SUMMARY

REF: PORT LOUIS 0731 (DTG 300719Z JUN 78)

PORT LOUIS A-56, JULY 7, 1978

1. THERE WERE NO FIREWORKS AT THE LABOR PARTY'S ANNUAL CONVENTION HELD JULY 1 AND 2. THE "OLD GUARD" PREVAILED IN THE RE-ELECTION OF INCUMBENT PARTY PRESIDENT JAMES BURTY DAVID BY 580 VOTES TO 190 FOR A CHALLENGER SUPPORTED BY THE PARTY'S DISSIDENT GROUP. A PARTY EXECUTIVE LOADED WITH THE "OLD GUARD" WAS ALSO CHOSEN UNANIMOUSLY. FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO GAVE A FIERY SPEECH IN WHICH HE ATTACKED THE OPPOSITION MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM), CALLING FOR THE "DESTRUCTION" OF THE  
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PARTY AND ITS FOUR LEADERS, WHOM HE TERMED THE "GANG OF FOUR." PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM SAID THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE IN POWER UNTIL THE END OF ITS ELECTORAL MANDATE IN 1981, THUS DENYING RUMORS THAT GENERAL ELECTIONS ARE IMMINENT. HARRIS RAMPHUL FORMALLY JOINED THE LABOR PARTY, RAISING ITS PARLIAMENTARY MARGIN TO 38 SEATS AGAINST 32 FOR THE MMM.

AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WHERE HE EXPLAINED HIS DECISION, RAMPHUL CHARACTERIZED THE MMM AS A "FASCIST" PARTY WHICH RESORTS TO VIOLENCE. HE DENOUNCED THE MMM LEADERSHIP FOR DICTATORIAL PRACTICES AND BERENGER PERSONALLY FOR THE CLOSE TIES HE MAINTAINS WITH DICTATORIAL REGIMES IN AFRICA.

2. THE MMM POLITBURO MET FOR A SESSION OF "SELF-CRITICISM" AND TO STUDY THE REASONS FOR THE PARTY'S LOSS OF ELECTORAL SUPPORT. THEY DECIDED THAT A CHANGE OF STRATEGY AND TACTICS IS CALLED FOR. THE PRESS SPECULATED THAT THE PARTY'S FOREIGN POLICY HAS CAUSED THE MOST TROUBLE AND WILL BE REVISED. BERENGER AND OTHER PARTY LEADERS HAVE BEEN AT PAINS TO STRESS THE MMM'S COMMITMENT TO "NON-ALIGNMENT" AND TO DISTANCE THE PARTY SOMEWHAT FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

3. TWO MMM DEPUTIES, DARGA AND DAYALAH, WERE SENTENCED TO THREE MONTH PRISON TERMS FOR SEDITION IN A TRIAL PRESIDED OVER BY A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE. THEY WERE CONVICTED FOR VIOLATING THE PUBLIC ORDER ACT BY INCITING THE CROWDS AT MMM RALLIES TO ATTACK MINISTERS AND THE STATE SECURITY SERVICE. THEIR ATTORNEY, MMM PRESIDENT JUGNAUTH, ADMITTED THEIR GUILT BUT PLEADED FOR CLEMENCY. HE DID NOT APPEAL. THE TWO DEPUTIES WILL NOT LOSE THEIR ASSEMBLY SEATS. THEY WENT FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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COURT STRAIGHT TO JAIL.

4. IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW MAURITIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. BALANCY ANNOUNCED THAT THE USG WILL SUPPLY MAURITIUS WITH FOUR MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF RICE UNDER PL 480 TITLE I. THE REPORTER SUBSEQUENTLY OBTAINED FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE A FIGURE OF 30,000 TONS OF RICE AS THE AMOUNT TO BE SUPPLIED BY THE U.S. AND USED THIS IN HIS HEADLINE. (A PL 480 REQUEST IS PENDING FROM A MUCH LESSOR AMOUNT, BUT HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED.)  
KEELEY

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014